

Liturgy for Grandparents

*So faith comes from what is heard and what is heard
comes through the word of Christ*
Romans 10:17



Spread the seed of faith. It grows, thrives and never dies

In my work with families, both in a secular setting of parenting support and in children's ministry in my local church, I have become increasingly aware of how many grandparents play such an important role in providing childcare to their grandchildren. This is not just occasional babysitting or weekend sleepovers, but daily afterschool care or daytime care for babies and preschool children.

I have met grandparents bringing their grandchildren to toddler groups and coffee mornings, and grandparents who leave promptly from afternoon Bible study to collect their grandchildren from school. I have chatted to grandparents dropping grandchildren at Brownie and Cub meetings. I meet grandparents in the Children's Centres. I bump into them in the library, the swimming pool and the supermarket. I know grandparents who bring their grandchildren to Sunday worship. I hear grandparents who love to share stories of their grandchildren.

Grandparents can be invaluable to their families, even when living at a distance. They make a powerful and irreplaceable contribution to society as a whole and play an influential part in church life. So, I wanted to affirm, celebrate and show appreciation for the role of grandparenting; so that it does not go unnoticed or get taken for granted. How could I do this?

From talking with grandparents, great-grandparents and grandchildren, a liturgy grew. It can be used in worship settings where grandparents and grandchildren can be invited to share and to party! But, I am also aware that for some, grandparenting can bring pain, anxiety, regret and guilt. For some, there exists a real longing to become a grandparent and hope can diminish... The liturgy had to be sensitive to many situations.

It is now complete and ready for sharing. Here is a taster...

One of the joys of crafting the liturgy was working with the children and exploring their experience of spending time with their grandparents. The following prayer is part of the liturgy and was written with the help of some wonderful children.

Thank you, God, for Grannies
Who make us cups of tea,
Who help us with our homework
And then let us watch TV.

Thank you, God, for Granddads,
Who like to be quiet, it seems.
Who sit in a chair – their favourite one –
And sleep and snore and dream.

*For everything they are
For everything they do
Lord we praise you.*

Thank you, God, for Nannies,
Who take us out for treats.
Who cook roast dinner and always say,
'There's more for you to eat.'

Thank you, God, for Papas,
Who are always ready to hear
just what we've been up to
And who smile and nod and cheer.

*For everything they are
For everything they do
Lord we praise you.*

Thank you, God, for Nans,
Especially the knitting ones.
They love to knit our jumpers,
Hats and scarves and gloves.
Cosy, warm and fluffy
Every stitch filled with love.

Thank you, God, for Grandpas.
Some live far away.
To visit we travel on a plane
And stay for a holiday.

*For everything they are
For everything they do
Lord we praise you.*

Thank you, God, for 'my old man'.
Well, that's what my Dad says.
Sometimes we visit and help a while.
Sometimes he's grumpy, sometimes he smiles.

Grandparents make our families great
And God we really thank you
For your love to grannie and grandpa
And your love to all of us too.

For everything they are
For everything they do
Lord we praise you.
Amen